

Ash Bark Beetle

Causes branch dieback on ash

Name and Description—*Hylesinus* spp. [Coleoptera: Curculionidae: Scolytinae]

Larvae of ash bark beetles are white, C-shaped grubs. Adults are small, gray beetles about 1/13-1/6 inch (2-4 mm) long with black markings (fig. 1).

Hosts—Ash

Life Cycle—Adults overwinter in tunnels under the bark of infested branches. In the spring, females begin constructing egg galleries in trees that are typically recently felled or weakened host trees. The egg galleries run perpendicular to the branch or trunk (fig. 2). Eggs are laid along the sides of the galleries. Larvae tunnel between the bark and the wood throughout the summer, feeding away from the egg gallery. There can be one to three generations per year, depending on location.



Figure 1. Adult ash bark beetle. Photo: David Capaert, Michigan State University, Bugwood.org.

Damage—Generally, the favored breeding material is recently cut or broken trees. Living trees weakened by mechanical damage or disease may also be attacked. Entrance, exit, and breathing holes can be found on the outside of infested trees (fig. 3). In July or August, the leaves on branches that have been girdled will turn yellow and then brown as the branch dies.

Management—Management is generally not warranted. As these beetles generally attack much-stressed trees, maintaining tree vigor will reduce impact. Infested branches can be removed prior to beetle emergence if necessary.



Figure 2. Ash bark beetle galleries. Photo: James Solomon, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org.



Figure 3. Ash bark beetle damage. Photo: James Solomon, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org.

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1. Dix, M.E.; Pasek, J.E.; Harrell, M.O.; Baxendale, F.P. 1986. Common insect pests of trees in the Great Plains. EC 86-1548. Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service. 44 p.
 2. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 1985. Insects of eastern forests. Misc. Publ. 1426. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 608 p.